



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2019 – Teleconference

Public Participation via teleconference

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members present

Bryan Much, off-highway motorcycle representative (member of *Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association (WOHMA)*) [STC Chair]

Ken Neitzke, hiking representative (member of the *Ice Age Trail Alliance*) [STC Vice Chair]

John Siegert, off-road bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)

Kricket Jewett, equestrian representative (member of *Wisconsin Horse Council*)

Randy Harden, ATV/UTV representative (member of *Wisconsin ATV-UTV Association (WATVA)*)

Doug Johnson, snowmobiling representative (member of *Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC)*) [STC Secretary]

Roy Atkinson, bicycle touring/rail trail bicycling/road bicycling

Bob Fasick, *Wisconsin Department of Transportation* [non-voting]

Skip Maletzke, tourism/business representative [non-voting]

State Trails Council Members not in attendance

Ben Popp, cross-country skiing representative (Executive Director of American Birkebeiner)

Luana Schneider, 4-wheel drive vehicles representative (member of *Wisconsin 4-Wheel Drive Association*)

Bob Fasick, *Wisconsin Department of Transportation* [non-voting]

Invited speakers

Jonathan Kult

Anne Scott

Jeff Anderson

Others present

Hank Wozniel

Ryan Harden

Mark Kaczmarek

WI DNR Staff present

Kathryn Gehrke

10:00 A.M. – Welcome and introductions

- Much called the meeting to order. Council members and guests introduced themselves.



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

10:02 A.M. – Agenda review/repair and approval of November meeting minutes

- Agenda repair, add in application for water trails after Tourism item, around 11:10
- Doug motion
- Ken second
- Any opposed, none. Amanous
- Motion to approve, Doug, Randy second. None oppose.

10:04 A.M. – Chair report. Discuss future meeting locations

- Thank you to Doug for being SCORP rep for council
- Let Bryan know about meeting location in April
- Issue about future meeting issues?
- No.

10:05 A.M. – Public comment

- Moved public comment early, any comment now?
- None

10:06 A.M. – Update PAL

- Bureau of Facilities and Lands, Jonathan planning section and Anne real estate section
- Jonathan goes through handout
 - State statute mandated
 - Data is completed but ongoing updating
 - January NRB board meeting link for more detail
 - GIS data set housed in DNR Land Management database
 - If you are GIS user, you can use first link “””
 - If you are not a GIS user you can use one of two web viewers
 - Public Access Lands
 - Property Planning Viewer
 - Property Planning Viewer has additional information specific to planning providing info that may not be in the PAL, such as development level of the roads
 - Data is coming from Land Management Database which is managed by Wildlife, we all have access to the data and PAL hosts data
 - Page two screenshot shows how to view when roads are open and closed in Property Planning Viewer
 - Page three screenshot shows how to view when roads are open and what access in PALS
- The map has all the information, but it may take time to find all the information you want or get used to the filters
- Demo would be useful for everyone at a future meeting
- GIS info is provided to the public through Open Data Portal, and may be able to provide the road info for the public
 - DNR homepage – type “GIS” click on “OpenDataPortal” then the instructions are there for using
- All info should be at oldest 2-3 years so it



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

- Cricket – notation on map to show for what user the roads are open for?
 - No, it was driven by motorized so it just shows those uses
- Trail Mapping Project is now on hold
- There are many user groups that are able to assist with the collection of this data – maybe we should bring this up to Parks at a future meeting
- Roy – agree that user groups will be interested in helping collect data
- Snowmobile and ATV groups need to be mapped for grants
- Trail vs Route – route is a feature that goes along or on a road, trail is a non-road
- Definition of roads are in the clickable link of NRB meeting - on the handout
- Helen – DNR mapping project is at a standstill right now? Yes, there is currently no timeline for that now
- Tentatively plan for

10:33 A.M. – DNR Report.

- Western Prairie Regional Plan – kickoff meeting to initiate public involvement and the planning process was held, Nov. 5 from 5-7 in Baldwin, WI; the public comment period closed Nov. 13. The department anticipates presenting the draft plan for public review and comment in the Spring 2019 and presenting for NRB approval in August or September 2019. (Beth Kienbaum lead planner)
- Superior Coastal Plain, Northwest Sands and Northwest Lowlands Regional Plans – these three regions located in the northwest part of the state are being planned concurrently. These plans were posted for review and comment at the beginning of December 2018 and are open for comment through January 6. We anticipate presenting for NRB approval in February 2019. (Phil Rynish and Beth Kienbaum co-planners)
- Minor non-motorized trail expansions are proposed for Amnicon Falls, Copper Falls, and Pattison State Parks. The biggest change for state parks in the Superior Coastal Plain will be the addition of mountain bike trails to the northeast corner of Pattison State Park. For the Northwest Sands, short stretches of single-track mountain bike trail will be allowed on Beaver Brook Wildlife Area when construction in the Wild Rivers State Trail corridor is not feasible. This will connect the City of Spooner with mountain bike trails in the Washburn County Forest.
- Blue Mound State Park Master Plan - the department is in the pre-planning phase of revising the BMSP master plan. We anticipate engaging the public in early February 2019. (Phil Rynish lead planner)
- Northeast Sands Regional Plan – the department anticipates posting the draft plan for public review and comment in late January with public meetings held in early February 2019. We anticipate presenting for NRB approval in Spring 2019. (Yoyi Steele lead planner)
- Only minor non-motorized trail changes are proposed in this plan. A new primitive walking trail is proposed on the Pine-Popple Wild Rivers for scenic viewing of Breakwater Falls. A



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

section of an informal (non-designated) multi-use trail system on the Potato Rapids Flowage Unit of the Peshtigo River State Forest is proposed to be closed due to impacts to an archaeological site.

- Southwest Savanna Regional Plan - the department is in the pre-planning phase of this regional plan. We anticipate engaging the public in February or March 2019. (Savannah Ernzen lead planner)
- Working with Buffalo County on a biking trail connection into MN at Winona. This trail will eventually extend the Great River State Trail northward. The project plans are completed and the county is currently working on real estate acquisition. Construction is expected to begin summer 2019.
- Continuing to look at repairing rail-trail bridges that are in need. Most trails have emerging problems with aging bridges.
- Projects to repair flood damages on several trails in Douglas Co and trails in southwestern WI.
- In the process of updating Hillsboro Trail MOU with the city of Hillsboro, Juneau County and Vernon County.
- RTP update from Bobbi: Sect. 7 concurrence has been obtained from USFWS so final approval steps are in process in federal highways and WisDOT. Hope to be able to send out grant agreements by end of January! Next year we will have to have all compliance and project lists to federal highways by end of August so that they will have time to do the final approvals before the end of Sept. After Sept., a percentage of our unobligated funding will be taken back. This is being implemented by the FAST (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) Act Rescission process enacted by Congress. We are planning to move up our funding meeting to June and to start working on the state and federal compliance on projects most likely to be funded before the funding meeting.

10:42 AM – Tourism Rep.

- Skip has been our representative for some years now but has not been able to attend a meeting in about a year now due to work agenda.
- Jeff please introduce yourself
- Serve one of four regional tourism specialists, Jeff feels it might be best to have the four regional tourism specialists serve depending on where the meeting is and the topic
- Skip agrees this would be a good solution
- Brian asks for motion to use the Department of Tourism for tourism representation on the council
- Ken seconds the motion to allow the Department of Tourism to sit on the council and represent tourism, not a voting member

10:49 A.M. – Application for Water Trails

- Mark please explain who the recommendations came from



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

- Volunteered with both groups, specifically on debris removal
 - Fox City Outdoor Hiking and Kayaking Group
 - Madison Outdoor Adventure Group
- Describe how you would be able to communicate information to user groups and how you would get information from various user groups
- Mark is active with the Ice Age Trail and Bike Federation Member
- Questions from members?
- John Sigert – main question is we made a recommendation to fill this seat a few years ago, do you know what happened?
 - Bryan – we have not heard back either way
- Doug Johnson – sounds like Mark would be a good addition to the council
- Doug makes motion we moved this forward with the recommendation, Roy seconds the motion
- Appose? None. Motion carried.

11:00 AM – User group highlights

- Ken N. – biggest thing is the Government Shutdown, no repair, hikes etc. First day hike looked like a huge success, I was at the Southern Kettles
- Doug – 13 counties reporting open or partially open trails, invites sent out within the week for the VIP ride in Minocqua, Governor is considering adding miles of funded trails due to the trail pass, status of Stower 7 Lake county deemed it will be open for snowmobile this season
- Randy – no additional to my user report
- Cricket – link to sharing the trails conference information, Governor Dodge equestrian group raised \$55,000 and they can begin first phase
- Helen – two user groups have meetings coming up in April and rides coming up this summer
- John S. – mountain bike club out of Waupaca, Crones, received gold seal award from FWSP for providing best single-track mountain bike trails at Hartman Creek State Park
- Jim W. – no report
- Roy K. – has been getting in touch with FWSP and Bike Federation and continue working with Bike Chippewa Valley. Big picture thing is the report I included in my notes where Wisconsin fell from number 2 to number 24
- Bryan M. – many motorcycles ride in winter with specialty tires but we are short on ice so a few events have been cancelled
- Jeff A. – snow conditions report is up and running on the tourism site

11:18 A.M. – Public comment

- Mark - Drop in number on League of American Bicycling report
- Ryan – VIP for road legal four-wheel drive is being held at Camp Sinawa. Using GIS data to map routes as well as user generated trail conditions and reviews. Routes show differencing between speed and hills. *RL WD4 “trails tab”*

11:29 A.M. – Future agenda items

- PAL demo
- North Country Trail – July or October meeting



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

- Storm damage photos, put out a call or make online portal
- User group involvement with trail mapping project
- Doug – one more comment, we see our ranking on bicycle has dropped but I have seen many trail communities as well as AWSC is designating snowmobile communities, so there are still positive things being done.

11:34 A.M. – Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn by Doug. Seconded by Randy. All approved. Meeting adjourned.

Appendix – User Group Reports (submitted before meeting by Council Members)

STC User Group Reports – Equestrians

On November 2-4, 2018 three members of the Wisconsin Horse Council Trail Committee had the privilege of attending the National Equestrian Trail Conference held in Phoenix AZ.

This year the theme was Sharing the Trails, so we did have not only information on equestrian trails, but presentations from hikers, bikers, and motorized sports. It was a great topic that is immensely relevant to issues that we face here in Wisconsin.

If you visit the web site <https://www.sharingthetrails.com/> you will find the complete itinerary, as well as the power point presentations presented at some of the sessions.

With registration starting early on Friday, we arrived on Thursday and were able to enjoy a ride out into the Tonto National Forest which is 350,00 acres of rugged desert! The difference in terrain and plant life was striking to say the least!

One of the sessions I attended was a pictorial view of the National Scenic Trail - Arizona Trail, and some facts on how it came to completion recently. Ellen Schopes and Larry Simkins (71 & 78-year-old) completed a through hike of the entire 800 miles last year! The pictures were absolutely incredible! But what caught my attention was the sheer number of land managers, and local, state, and federal agencies that worked together to make this multi-use trail a reality! Almost the entire trail is open to hikers, bikers and equestrians (there are a few spots that have to be detoured on horseback due to terrain, but the majority of the trail is open to riding!) The power point can be viewed on the sharing the trails web site.

Volunteers are a national problem, that is growing more vast, as more help is needed in parks. Tips from one session included set up an annual calendar, so people can plan ahead, be organized, have a plan, tools and training if needed for all volunteers so they feel like they have made a contribution. The number one recruitment tool, is giveaways be it a T-shirt or lunch!

The one speaker I most enjoyed was Thomas Rosenfield the President of HillStaffer, a lobbyist firm in Washington DC. Now, you must know that I really hate dealing with the legalese of government



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

and legislation. But Thomas was a speaker who commanded your attention, and made a step by step list of what we can do as individuals when writing or calling our local, state, and federal officials. I often find my self asking trail users to write and contact officials, I now more firmly believe that the 5 minutes of so each of you spends making our voices heard, truly makes a difference. Please be sure to take the minute and speak up when we have the opportunity!

Spring Trail rides and fund raisers are being planned around the state. The largest 3 day horse fair, Midwest Horse Fair plans are well underway. Tickets for the event, and for the evening shows are now available. There will be a couple of speakers who are speaking especially to trail riders and their needs.

Submitted by: Kricket Jewett

ATV/UTV

ATV winter riding in general, coupled with the improvement and advancement of the side x side UTV, many now with cabs and heaters on board, continue to increase requests for wintertime use across the state.

The Wisconsin ATV UTV Association (WATVA) has conducted Winter Riding Workshops the past two years at one of our premier dealerships in the Oshkosh area. Attendance was quite healthy, even more attending this past month versus the first Winter Workshop we were part of last year. There were a few local clubs on hand but the majority of attendees were relatively new riders seeking pertinent and correct information as they plan their outdoor recreational activities.

Also invited and on hand was one of the new DNR Outdoor Skills Trainer's, she hosted an informational booth regarding safety tips and ATV UTV safety training in general. Our organization is very pleased that large dealerships such as Team Winnebagoland have become involved and active to help spread the correct information to the general public on all matters related to ethical and safe use of the machinery they sale and service.

WATVA is hosting a number of different types of educational workshops and training sessions at their upcoming statewide conference taking place April 12th through the 14th at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Stevens Point.

As part of the Trail Patrol Ambassador (TPA) evolution, our Next Gen improvements include coordinating "Club Coordinators" willing to take on the role of training their own ambassador applicants with the assistance of our regional coordinators using our standard operating guidelines (SOGs). Under our current TPA program, our regional coordinators have handled all the training of recruits. We project this new phase of club trainers will allow us to reach even more TPA volunteers while our SOGs will be the management tool, along with our regional coordinators working with the club coordinators, making sure the end product is a quality service to the public.

Our regional coordinators throughout Wisconsin continue meeting with our existing clubs and their various activities while helping assist new club startups on a regular basis. Each club location has



State of Wisconsin GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

their own unique and varied experience in club management but as more local clubs form and mature, new regional organizations comprised of the local clubs in that region are now formalizing and taking hold around the state.

Educational emphasis to our clubs and the public remains a high priority within our organization. Next our leadership team wrestles with how best to communicate the educational messages we proudly share, using a variety of different communication platforms. These two focus areas are wrapped around our use of enforcement methods, both as organized peer pressure as well as credentialed enforcement. These philosophies have served our organization well but we are always exploring new trends and methods to help us manage the growth of this recreational sport.

I enjoy hearing how other trail users groups and recreational sports are managing their chosen form of outdoor recreation, I personally find the discussions on the State Trails Council help in that arena.

Submitted by: Randy Harden

Bicycle touring/rail trail bicycling/road bicycling

I saw this a few weeks back in a Wisconsin Bike Fed email. It highlights the most recent League of American Bicyclists report on Bicycle Friendly States. It caught me off guard, so I thought I should share.

From the Wisconsin Bike Fed:

Wisconsin has fallen from 2nd place to an #25 in this year's [Bicycle Friendly State Progress Reports](#).

“Once Wisconsin was a national leader in bicycling with the most miles of trails and ranked second best state overall for bicycling by [The League of American Bicyclists](#) in their [Bicycle Friendly State rating system](#). In the ten years that the LAB has been ranking bicycle-friendly states, Wisconsin has fallen from 2nd place to an embarrassing #25 in this year's [Bicycle Friendly State Progress Reports](#). Today both Minnesota and Michigan have hundreds of miles more trails and Pennsylvania is poised to have more than Wisconsin soon.”

You can read more at:

<http://wisconsinbikefed.org/blog/2018/12/14/another-black-eye-for-wisconsin-bicycling/>

You can review the report here:

https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/BFS_Progress_Report_2018_Wisconsin.pdf

I have reached out to the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks and the Wisconsin Bike Fed. I have no other group updates to share at this time. I am also becoming more active with the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks. I will continue to work on making links throughout the state and will have more information to share at our next meeting.



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

Four-Wheel Drive

We are presently encouraging the 4WD community to express their interest in possible usage in the current region Master Plans that are currently asking for public input.

I have no further update on a meeting of various main Four Wheel Drive (4WD) groups in Wisconsin that was supposed to occur in January. There are various ideas being thrown around as to what should occur for legislation and this group is looking at various possibilities.
No further update on a public 4WD Park.

Many groups/clubs are planning for their upcoming year of 4WD activities both local and also out-of-state. Various groups have at least one activity a month other than meetings.
Even though it is winter, as long as the snow is not covering the land 4WD groups are out there working on trails on private property that they have available to them--having the foliage down makes cutting some trails much easier.

I am looking forward to learning from Helen the updated information on the inventorying, classifying and mapping of "roads" on State properties and how to access this information.
There are groups/clubs putting on Charity events with one recent very successful one being the Holiday Charity Light Ride in Sheboygan put on by WOHVA.

More groups/clubs are providing education and training programs through workshops, clinics, meet and greets that are becoming very successful. This is a good means to educate folks on how to learn about their vehicle and how to use their vehicles in a Tread Lightly manner. Also NOHVCC is starting a series of webinars designed to deliver quality and helpful information on OHV safety, education, management and other issues related to motorized recreation.
A legislative/DNR/Tourism VIP Ride is being planned at Camp Sinawa on May 31 hosted by RL4WD SEWI. This group is also putting on a Crawler Fest event in June that includes vendors, show, trail riding and GeoCrawl (poker run type).

At the Wisconsin Four Wheel Drive meeting in October a committee in regard to Trail Specs was developed. Joel Kasper is heading up the Trail Specs program for the Four Wheel Drive Community and is the liaison with the DNR. Joel has submitted information in regard to the trail specs etc. to Brigit Brown and he is looking forward to working with her on this.
Respectfully Submitted by Luana Schneider

Submitted by: Luana Schneider

Hiking

The lack of significant snow and cold temperatures this winter season has allowed hiking trails to be remain quite busy with hikers and trail maintainers alike.

Both the Ice Age Trail Alliance and the North Country Trail Association in Wisconsin have been quite busy with guided hikes and trail improvement projects being held on most weekends. Given the



State of Wisconsin GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

amount of storm damage that both national scenic trails had experienced this past summer, this milder winter has been a blessing in that trail repair and maintenance can extend longer into the winter the season.

First Day Hikes in Wisconsin were held January 1st at (10) Wisconsin state park locations.

First Day Hikes which is a national event, was created by The National Association of State Park Directors in 2012. On New Year's Day, America's State Parks have all 50 states offering free, guided First Day Hike Programs. These hikes provide a means for individuals and families to welcome the coming year in the outdoors, exercising and connecting with nature. In 2018, nearly 55,000 people rang in the New Year, collectively hiking over 133,000 miles throughout the country on the guided hikes. Numerous others hiked state park trails throughout the day. The guided First Day Hikes are led by knowledgeable state park staff and volunteers. The distance and rigor vary from park to park, but all hikes aim to create a fun experience for the whole family. People are invited to savor the beauty of the state park's natural resources with the comfort of an experienced guide so they may be inspired to take advantage of these local treasures throughout the year (<https://www.stateparks.org/initiatives-special-programs/first-day-hikes/>).

Sadly, all First Day Hikes sponsored by the volunteer chapters of the Ice Age Trail Alliance and the North Country Trail Association were cancelled due to the government shutdown unless they were able to partner with another organization to assume event responsibility.

The government shutdown has had a significant impact on both the Ice Age Trail Alliance and the North Country Trail Association in Wisconsin. All volunteer activities have been suspended until the government shutdown is over. All national scenic trail volunteers are ultimately National Parks Service volunteers above and beyond being national scenic trail organization volunteers.

Official Notice from Eric Gabriel, National Park Service Superintendent for the Ice Age National Scenic Trail:

In the case of a government lack of appropriations "a shutdown", National Park Service (NPS) volunteers (VIPs) are not allowed to serve. VIPs are considered part of the workforce, representing the National Park Service, in support of our mission. During a shutdown the normal protections and liability coverages are suspended.

VIPs will follow the same schedule as furloughed NPS employees and must follow the same restrictions as NPS employees. This includes not accessing closed federal buildings and not using any federal equipment or property, such as vehicles, computers or mobile phones, maintenance equipment, or educational props. VIPs may continue to stay in NPS housing and campgrounds at the discretion of park superintendents.

Individuals or groups wishing to volunteer for park partners who are active during the government shutdown must sign up separately as a volunteer(s) for that partner and be covered by insurance and human resource policies of that partner. In the case of a volunteer enlisting to serve with a partner, the volunteer must also wear whatever uniform is prescribed by the partner but may not wear the



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

NPS VIP uniform in performance of these duties. (<https://www.iceagetrail.org/government-shutdown-and-the-iat/>).

Both the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail remain open for hiking, although there will be no volunteer support services for hikers, trail events, or trail maintenance.

The good news is that Wisconsin has lots of great hiking trails for all to enjoy at any time of year, even in winter.

Submitted by: Ken Neitzke

Off-highway motorcycles

Off-highway motorcycling is in transition from riding on dirt to riding on frozen waters in the state during the winter months. Once the ice is of sufficient thickness, many riders will become involved in ice riding through informal gatherings on lakes around the state or by becoming involved in some of the organized events planned for the season. Tires with special screws provide remarkable traction on ice. I attended a conference with the American Motorcyclist Association in December. While there I completed a "train the trainer" course to assist people in developing skills to become effective advocates. Earlier this year I contributed to developing a new course for leaders of organized off-highway rides. I was able to complete this new course during the conference. While at the conference I was presented with an award from the AMA Board of Directors for my work in support of motorcyclists. <https://www.americanmotorcyclist.com/Home/News-Story/american-motorcyclist-association-announces-recipients-of-2018-ama-board-of-directors-awards> Work continues on the administrative code required for full implementation of the off-highway motorcycle law in Wisconsin.

Submitted by: Bryan Much

Snowmobile Report

We are seeing a slow start to the snowmobile season this year. Currently 13 counties are reporting open trails or partially open trails on the TravelWisconsin website, all in the far north. Some counties suffered considerable storm damage from heavy rains and flooding last summer which has yet to be repaired. In spite of low snow conditions and poor ice in many areas snowmobilers are out enjoying what they can. Trail pass sales have been brisk and as we approach the middle of January Wisconsin snowmobilers are anxiously awaiting more snow.

The Association of Wisconsin has instituted a Snowmobile Friendly Community program and is currently considering three applications for the designation. Cutoff date for this round of applications is the 10th of January.

The World Championship Derby track in Eagle River is under new ownership this year and preparations are underway for the 56th running of the World Championship race. Action begins this week culminating in the crowning of the Champion on the 20th of January.

The 11th annual Military Appreciation Ride will take place in Eagle River January 21st. The annual Snowmobile Groomer Show is scheduled for the 6th and 7th of February in Gt. Germain.



State of Wisconsin

GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

The VIP Ride sponsored by the AWSC will take place on the 11th and 12th of February in Minocqua. Invitations have been delayed due to the election season but will be sent out soon.

The new trail pass program is working well and we are encouraged to know that the Snowmobile Rec Council will be considering applications for funding new miles of trail this year.

The AWSC is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year with appropriate activities planned for the annual Spring Convention at the end of March.

Submitted by: Doug Johnson

DRAFT